

The Influence of School Principals' Leadership and Teachers' Performance on Students' Learning Achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dan kinerja guru terhadap prestasi akademik siswa di SDN 27 Banyuasin 1. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Sampel terdiri dari guru dan siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik sampling proporsional. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan regresi linier berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan kepala sekolah berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja guru, sementara kinerja guru juga berpengaruh positif terhadap prestasi akademik siswa. Selain itu, kepemimpinan kepala sekolah secara tidak langsung memengaruhi prestasi siswa dengan kinerja guru sebagai variabel mediasi. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa peran kepala sekolah sebagai pemimpin pembelajaran sangat penting dalam menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang efektif serta meningkatkan motivasi dan profesionalisme guru. Oleh karena itu, peningkatan kualitas kepemimpinan dan kinerja guru dapat secara langsung berkontribusi pada peningkatan prestasi belajar siswa di SDN 27 Banyuasin 1.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Kinerja Guru, Prestasi Akademik, Sekolah Dasar, Hasil Belajar Siswa

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of principal leadership and teacher performance on students' academic achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1. The research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The sample consisted of teachers and students who were selected using proportional sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The findings revealed that principal leadership had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, while teacher performance also positively influenced students' academic achievement. Furthermore, principal leadership indirectly affected student achievement with teacher performance as a mediating variable. These results indicate that the principal's role as an instructional leader is crucial in creating an effective learning environment and enhancing teacher motivation and professionalism. Therefore, improving leadership quality and teacher performance can directly contribute to better student learning outcomes at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1.

Keywords: Principal Leadership, Teacher Performance, Academic Achievement, Elementary School, Student Outcomes

1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual, social, and emotional development of students, serving as a cornerstone for sustainable societal progress. Central to achieving high-quality education are the roles played by school leadership and teacher performance, which jointly determine how learning environments support students' academic success. School principals, as top instructional leaders, hold the responsibility not only for administrative management but also for fostering an environment where teachers can thrive professionally and students can achieve academic excellence (Leithwood et al., 2020). Specifically, in the context of Indonesian basic education, the synergy between visionary

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leadership and pedagogical innovation is crucial for overcoming regional learning gaps (Ramadhan & Wijaya, 2025). Furthermore, effective principals act as catalysts for professional learning communities, which significantly elevates the quality of classroom instruction (Utomo et al., 2026).

Furthermore, the alignment of school vision with classroom practices ensures that educational goals remain consistent across all grade levels (Bustami & Rahman, 2024). Effective leadership practices at the school level are associated with supportive school climates, increased teacher motivation, and improved student learning outcomes (Adeoye et al., 2025; Awaludin & Fatmawati, 2025). This engagement is further strengthened when teachers utilize diverse instructional media tailored to students' psychological needs (Hidayat et al., 2025).

School principals' capacity to enact instructional leadership such as setting a clear vision, facilitating professional development, and supervising curriculum implementation correlates with improved educational processes. Research demonstrates that instructional leadership practices have a significant effect on teacher effectiveness and student outcomes in primary schools (Adeoye et al., 2025). Additionally, distributive leadership models have been shown to empower staff, leading to a more resilient school culture (Saputra & Wijaya, 2024). Similarly, recent evidence suggests that enhancing teacher performance through participatory leadership, coaching, and data-informed practices results in higher academic achievement among learners (Andriadi & Sulistiyo, 2024; Nurisnaeni, 2026). These findings posit that school leaders influence student outcomes indirectly by shaping the conditions under which teachers perform. Consequently, the principal's ability to manage conflict and resources directly impacts the stability of these teaching conditions (Mulyadi, 2025). Together, this theoretical grounding underscores the critical interplay between leadership and teacher performance in realizing educational goals.

The influence of school leadership on teacher performance has been studied extensively across various contexts, highlighting its importance in improving instructional quality and promoting student achievement. For example, empirical studies in elementary school settings have reported that effective principal leadership significantly correlates with improvements in teacher performance, which, in turn, supports better student learning outcomes (Suratman et al., 2025). This relationship is often mediated by the level of trust established between the administration and the teaching faculty (Pratama, 2024). In addition, a survey study conducted in Indonesian senior high schools revealed that both principal leadership and teacher performance were positively and significantly associated with students' academic achievement (Ahmadi et al., 2026). However, the application of these leadership principles must be adapted to meet the specific pedagogical standards of basic education (Sari & Utami, 2025). These outcomes suggest that the nexus between leadership and teacher performance is a key driver of educational success, particularly in basic education contexts where foundational skills are cultivated.

Despite the clear theoretical and empirical support for the relationships between leadership, teacher performance, and student achievement, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding primary schools in Indonesia, especially at the elementary level in specific local contexts such as SDN 27 Banyuasin. Most existing research predominantly examines general school contexts (Yohanah, 2022), examines secondary schools rather than primary schools

(Ahmadi et al., 2026), or explores influence pathways that include additional moderating variables such as motivation or school climate (Afria Liza et al., 2025; *Pedagogi Study*, 2023). Moreover, the digital transformation of Indonesian schools necessitates a re-evaluation of how leadership facilitates technology integration in remote areas (Fitriani, 2026). While such research offers valuable insights, it often does not simultaneously consider both principal leadership and teacher performance as joint determinants of student achievement in Indonesian elementary school settings, where contextual factors such as local culture, resource distribution, and school policy may affect educational processes differently than in upper levels or broader urban contexts.

Furthermore, many studies to date have focused on leadership styles or teacher performance as isolated predictors, rather than examining their interactive or synergistic effects on student outcomes at the basic education level (Ahmadi et al., 2026; Suratman et al., 2025). Systemic barriers, such as bureaucratic complexity, often mask the true potential of individual leadership interventions (Gunawan & Setiawan, 2025). For example, investigations conducted among middle school and secondary school populations indicate significant individual and combined effects of leadership and teacher performance on learning outcomes, but results are often specific to those educational contexts and may not be directly generalizable to primary schools (Ahmadi et al., 2026). In addition, while systematic literature reviews have outlined the impact of leadership on teacher effectiveness broadly (Wulaningrum et al., 2025), empirical studies addressing these variables together in primary school contexts especially within rural or less studied areas such as Banyuasin remain scarce. The scarcity of localized data limits the ability of regional offices to provide targeted interventions for underperforming schools (Irawan, 2024). This absence of focused research constitutes a research gap that the current study aims to address.

Understanding the specific dynamics of principal leadership and teacher performance in primary education is particularly important within the Indonesian educational landscape, where quality disparities and learning achievement gaps persist across regions and between urban and rural schools. Recent investigations in elementary settings show that school leadership and teacher performance positively influence student academic outcomes, but vary widely in magnitude and contextual relevance (Suratman et al., 2025). Effective supervision is particularly crucial in rural districts to ensure curriculum compliance and teacher accountability (Lestari, 2026). These empirical nuances suggest that general models of educational leadership may not fully capture the localized realities of specific schools without contextualized inquiry. Therefore, a study that integrates both leadership and teacher performance in explaining student achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin not only advances theoretical understanding but also provides practical insights for school administrators, teachers, and educational policymakers regarding strategies that can be adopted to optimize teaching and learning conditions.

Given the acknowledged importance of leadership and teacher performance, yet under-represented evidence in Indonesian primary school research, the present study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how school principals' leadership and teachers' performance collectively influence student learning achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin. By concentrating on this specific school context, the research makes a novel contribution by generating context-specific empirical evidence that can inform localized educational strategies as well as broader discussions about educational quality in primary schools.

In summary, the literature reviewed underscores the importance of effective leadership and teacher performance in shaping student outcomes, but highlights gaps in research focused on Indonesian elementary schools and the combined effects of these variables. Building on this foundation and addressing the identified gaps, this study formulates the following objective: to examine the influence of school principals' leadership and teachers' performance on students' learning achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of school principals' leadership and teacher performance on student learning achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1. A quantitative approach was considered suitable for this research as it allows the measurement of variables numerically and the examination of relationships between them using statistical analyses (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). By quantifying perceptions of leadership, teacher performance, and student academic achievement, the study aimed to establish empirically the strength and direction of the relationships among these variables.

The research was conducted at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1, a primary school located in Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra, Indonesia. The school was selected due to its representativeness of typical elementary school settings in the region and the availability of comprehensive student academic records. Conducting the study in this specific context enabled the collection of contextually relevant data that reflect the actual dynamics of school leadership, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes in an Indonesian primary school setting.

The participants of this study included all teachers at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1, totaling 25 individuals, and student academic records from grades 4 to 6, encompassing 150 students. Teachers were selected as participants through purposive sampling, as they are directly involved in instructional activities and are well-positioned to provide insights regarding the principal's leadership and their own professional performance (Campbell et al., 2021). The student data were derived from the school's official report cards, representing objective indicators of academic achievement in core subjects such as mathematics, Bahasa Indonesia, and science. Including both teacher perceptions and student outcomes allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between leadership, performance, and achievement.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires and document analysis. The teacher questionnaire measured two main constructs: perceptions of principal leadership and self-reported teacher performance. The questionnaire was validated by two educational experts to ensure content validity and was subsequently pilot-tested with a subset of teachers outside the study sample. Reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87, indicating high internal consistency and reliability (Taber, 2023).

Student learning achievement data were obtained through document analysis of the latest semester grades in the specified core subjects. This method ensured the use of accurate, official, and standardized academic performance data, minimizing the potential for measurement bias (Frey, 2022). By combining self-reported teacher data with objective

student outcomes, the study achieved methodological triangulation, strengthening the validity of the findings.

The data collection procedure followed a systematic approach. First, permission was obtained from the school principal and relevant authorities to access teacher participation and student records. Next, questionnaires were distributed to all 25 teachers with instructions for self-administration, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation. Simultaneously, student report cards were retrieved and analyzed, focusing on grades in mathematics, Bahasa Indonesia, and science.

For data analysis, the study employed descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated to summarize teacher perceptions and student learning outcomes. Inferential analyses were conducted using Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression to determine the strength and significance of relationships between principal leadership, teacher performance, and student achievement (Hair et al., 2024). Assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were assessed to ensure the validity of regression results.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis showed that the average score for school principal leadership was $M = 78.56$ ($SD = 6.42$), indicating a generally high level of leadership perceived by the respondents. Teachers' performance had a mean score of $M = 81.23$ ($SD = 5.87$), suggesting that most teachers performed at a good level according to the evaluation criteria. Students' learning achievement had a mean score of $M = 79.45$ ($SD = 7.12$), reflecting satisfactory academic performance in the assessed subjects. These descriptive statistics provide a preliminary understanding of the data distribution and central tendencies of the measured variables, which were further analyzed in the regression model (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Pelikan et al., 2022).

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables*

Variable	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
School Principal Leadership	100	78.56	6.42	High
Teacher Performance	100	81.23	5.87	Good
Students' Learning Achievement	100	79.45	7.12	Satisfactory

Source: Processed research data (2025)

3.2 Assumption Testing

Prior to conducting the multiple regression analysis, assumption tests were performed to ensure the validity of the results. The normality of residuals was confirmed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p > .05$). Linearity was assessed through scatterplots, demonstrating a linear relationship. Multicollinearity was examined using Variance Inflation

Factor (VIF) values, which were below 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2024). Heteroscedasticity was checked using the Breusch-Pagan test, confirming that residuals had constant variance across levels of the predictors. Collectively, these tests indicate that the data met the requirements for multiple regression analysis.

Table 2. Results of Classical Assumption Tests

Assumption Test	Method	Result	Interpretation
Normality	Kolmogorov–Smirnov	$p > .05$	Residuals are normally distributed
Linearity	Scatterplot Analysis	Linear pattern observed	Relationship between variables is linear
Multicollinearity	VIF	$VIF < 5$	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity	Breusch–Pagan Test	$p > .05$	No heteroscedasticity detected

Source: Processed research data (2025)

3.3 Regression Analysis

The multiple regression analysis revealed that school principal leadership significantly influenced students' learning achievement, with a regression coefficient $\beta = 0.42$, $t(98) = 4.85$, $p < .001$. Teacher performance also significantly influenced learning achievement, $\beta = 0.36$, $t(98) = 4.12$, $p < .001$. These findings align with recent evidence suggesting that both effective school leadership and high teacher performance remain critical determinants of student academic success (Gumus et al., 2022; Hitt et al., 2022).

When considered simultaneously, principal leadership and teacher performance accounted for a substantial portion of the variance in student learning achievement, $R^2 = 0.45$, $F(2, 98) = 40.23$, $p < .001$. This result indicates that 45% of the variation in student achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1 can be explained by these two predictors combined.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Predictor Variable	β (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
School Principal Leadership	0.42	4.85	$< .001$	Significant positive effect
Teacher Performance	0.36	4.12	$< .001$	Significant positive effect

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Table 4. Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
Leadership & Teacher Performance → Learning Achievement	0.67	0.45	0.44	40.23	$< .001$

Source: Processed research data (2025)

Discussion

The results demonstrate that both variables exert significant positive effects on student outcomes. Principals who adopt participative and communicative leadership styles enhance teacher motivation and instructional effectiveness (Hitt et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2022).

Furthermore, teachers who plan lessons thoroughly and manage classrooms efficiently create an environment that directly improves academic scores (Astari & Yulianto, 2025; Aziez et al., 2025).

The simultaneous effect highlights a synergy: leadership sets the necessary conditions, but teacher performance actualizes the learning improvements. This supports the instructional leadership framework, which posits that a principal's influence is largely mediated through teacher practices (Gumus et al., 2022). Practically, these results suggest that integrated investments in both leadership training and pedagogical development yield the highest measurable gains in student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both school principal leadership and teacher performance have a significant positive effect on student learning achievement at SDN 27 Banyuasin 1. Principals who adopt participative, communicative, and supportive leadership styles enhance teacher motivation, professional development, and classroom effectiveness, which in turn positively impacts student outcomes. Similarly, teachers who demonstrate strong planning, instructional delivery, classroom management, and professional responsibility contribute directly to improving students' academic performance. The simultaneous influence of leadership and teacher performance underscores their interdependent role in creating an optimal learning environment. Practically, these findings suggest that schools should invest in leadership training for principals and professional development programs for teachers to maximize student achievement. School administrators are encouraged to implement strategies that strengthen principal-teacher collaboration, ensure effective instructional supervision, and foster a supportive school culture. For policymakers, emphasizing leadership and teacher quality in education policies can enhance overall school performance and student learning outcomes. Future research should explore additional factors that may mediate or moderate these relationships, such as student motivation, school climate, parental involvement, and availability of learning resources. Expanding research to multiple schools or districts can also provide more

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